

Message Text

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TAGS: PARM, SOPN

SUBJECT: APRIL 17 ROUNDUP: PRESS ITEMS OF ARMS CONTROL
INTEREST

LONDON FOR AMB/EX, SOFIA FOR AMBASSADOR

1. GEORGE C. WILSON OF WASHINGTON POST REPORTED THAT CARTER
ADMINISTRATION WILL PRESS ANEW IN MOSCOW THIS WEEK FOR SIDE
AGREEMENT DESIGNED TO KEEP BACKFIRE BOMBER FROM POSING
PRIME THREAT TO U.S. "IDEA, ACCORDING TO ADMINISTRATION
OFFICIALS TRYING TO WRAP UP SALT AGREEMENT WITH SOVIET
UNION, IS TO INDUCE SOVIETS TO PLEDGE SEPARATELY THAT THEY
WILL LIMIT PRODUCTION AND MISSIONS OF BACKFIRE WITH LIMITED
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NUMBER OF BACKFIRES CONFINED TO PATROLLING SEA LANES IN AN
ANTI-SHIP ROLE AND TO TRAINING FOR THEATER RATHER THAN FOR
ALL-OUT NUCLEAR WAR, THESE OFFICIALS ARGUED, BOMBERS WOULD
REPRESENT SMALL ENOUGH RISK TO BE COVERED OUTSIDE FORMAL
SALT AGREEMENTS. U.S. COULD KEEP TRACK OF HOW SOVIET
UNION WAS TRAINING ITS CREWS TO FLY BACKFIRE, THESE OF-
FICIALS ADDED, AND COULD DETECT IN HURRY WHETHER DISTINC-

TIVE FLIGHT PATTERNS FOR NUCLEAR BOMBING WERE BEING PRACTICED.... IF SIDE AGREEMENT LIMITED TOTAL NUMBER OF BACKFIRES SOVIET UNION COULD PRODUCE AND HALF THAT NUMBER REMAINED COMMITTED TO ANTI-SHIP MISSION, DEFENSE OFFICIALS

INVOLVED WITH SALT NEGOTIATIONS CONTENTED THAT THREAT TO U.S. FROM BACKFIRE WOULD BE DIMINISHED." IN HIS ARTICLE SATURDAY, WILSON POINTED OUT THAT "U.S. INTELLIGENCE OFFICIALS CONCLUDED THAT ISRAEL HAD NUCLEAR BOMBS AFTER DETERMINING THAT SOME OF FLIGHT PROFILES ITS PILOTS WERE PRACTICING WOULD ONLY BE USED FOR NUCLEAR STRIKES."

2. KEVIN KLOSE OF WASHINGTON POST, IN DISPATCH FROM MOSCOW SUNDAY, SAID SECRETARY VANCE THIS WEEK WILL CONFRONT KREMLIN LEADERSHIP THAT FOR MONTHS HAS NOT BUDGED FROM ITS INSISTENCE THAT ONLY AMERICAN CONCESSIONS CAN BRING ABOUT NEW SALT TREATY. KLOSE SAID "KREMLIN HAS MADE CLEAR IT BELIEVES RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO SUPERPOWERS HAVE COME TO LOW POINT THAT CAN BE RESCUED BY PROGRESS TOWARD AN AGREEMENT. BUT THERE SEEMS TO BE NO APPRECIATION HERE OF NOTION THAT SOVIETS THEMSELVES MIGHT BE PARTLY TO BLAME FOR LOW STATE OF AFFAIRS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES." HE SAID "SOVIET PERCEPTION OF PRESIDENT CARTER IS NOT SOMETHING THAT ONE CAN LEARN DIRECTLY, BUT STEADFASTNESS OF KREMLIN'S SALT POSITION SEEMS TO SUGGEST THEY SENSE WEAKNESS OR INDECISION IN WHITE HOUSE. UNCLASSIFIED

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BREZHNEV AND OTHERS HAVE ASSERTED THAT AMERICAN VACILLATION HAS LED TO DELAYS IN NEGOTIATIONS."

3. WILLIAM BEECHER OF BOSTON GLOBE SAID "OF HANDFUL OF REMAINING SALT ISSUES, RUSSIANS CAN EASILY SPLIT DIFFERENCE WITH U.S. ON DIFFERING STRATEGIC CEILINGS, AGREE TO AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS PLACING ESSENTIALLY COSMETIC LIMITATIONS ON BACKFIRE BOMBER IN EXCHANGE FOR ITS NOT BEING INCLUDED UNDER CEILING, AND ACCEPT AMERICAN LANGUAGE ASSURING THAT IT WILL NOT PROVIDE WEAPONS TO ALLIES -- SUCH AS CRUISE MISSILES -- THAT MIGHT CIRCUMVENT TREATY. U.S. INSISTENCE ON BANNING TESTING OR DEPLOYMENT OF NEW MISSILES FOR THREE YEARS AND ON FORBIDDING SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN EXISTING WEAPONS ARE STRENUOUSLY OPPOSED BY SOVIET GENERALS. BUT TO DO LESS WOULD PROVIDE SENATE CRITICS MULTIMEGATON ARGUMENTS THAT TREATY IS ONE-SIDED, NOT ONLY FAILING TO REVERSE RUSSIANS' QUANTITATIVE EDGE, BUT FAILING ALSO TO INHIBIT THEIR CLOSING QUALITATIVE GAP." BEECHER SAID SOVIETS COULD WELL BE TEMPTED TO DELAY AS MANY OF THESE ISSUES AS POSSIBLE TO SUMMIT,"CALCULATING THAT CARTER COULD NOT AFFORD TO FAIL THERE, TOO."

4. SYNDICATED COLUMNISTS ROWLAND EVANS AND ROBERT NOVAK, IN WASHINGTON POST MONDAY, SAID VICTOR A. UTGOFF, DIRECTOR POLICY ANALYSIS ON NSC, PROPOUNDED THIS PRINCIPLE RECENTLY IN PRIVATELY ADDRESSING FELLOW ARMS SPECIALISTS: "BETTER THAT THIS COUNTRY NOT ENJOY CLEAR ARMS SUPERIORITY OVER SOVIET UNION FOR FEAR WE WOULD SOMETIMES MISUSE IT."

EVANS AND NOVAK SAID "ALTHOUGH HE COMPLAINS OFF-RECORD COMMENTS ARE BEING TAKEN OUT OF CONTEXT, UTGOFF PRINCIPLE EXPLAINS MUCH ABOUT NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY IN CARTER ADMINISTRATION. HIS REMARKS REFLECT SELF-DISTRUST AMONG MIDDLE-LEVEL OFFICIALS. FEARFUL THAT U.S. WILL MAKE NO MORE PRINCIPLED USE OF MILITARY POWER THAN SOVIET UNION, THEY ARE CONCERNED NOT ONLY ABOUT DETERRENCE IN MOSCOW

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BUT ALSO SELF-DETERRENCE IN WASHINGTON." EVANS AND NOVAK SAID NSC SPOKESMAN TOLD THEM "UTGOFF'S SPEECH WAS NOT CLEARED BY SUPERIORS AND IS NOT GOVERNMENT POLICY." UTGOFF'S SPEECH, EVANS AND NOVAK ADDED, SURELY "DOES NOT REFLECT WORLD VIEW OF BRZEZINSKI. BUT AS NONEXPERT IN MYSTERIOUS WORLD OF ARMS CONTROL, BRZEZINSKI DEPENDS ON TECHNICIANS WHO SHARE CONSIDERABLY DIFFERENT WORLD VIEW OF VIC UTGOFF."

5. NEW YORK TIMES SUNDAY PUBLISHED LENGTHY Q & A INTERVIEW ITS CORRESPONDENT BERNARD GWERTZMAN HAD WITH MARSHALL SHULMAN, VANCE'S ADVISER ON SOVIET AFFAIRS. SHULMAN SAID "IF WE ARE SUCCESSFUL IN NEGOTIATING GOOD SALT TREATY, IT WILL PROVIDE FLOOR UNDER RELATIONSHIP AND WILL GIVE MEASURE OF STABILIZATION TO OTHER ASPECTS SO THAT FLUCTUATIONS THAT OCCUR -- AND THEY INEVITABLY WILL BECAUSE OF SOVIET-AMERICAN POLITICAL COMPETITION IN VARIOUS PARTS OF WORLD -- WILL BE MINIMIZED. ASKED HOW U.S. SHOULD RESPOND TO "RATHER DISTASTEFUL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOVIET UNION," SUCH AS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AND DISSENT TRIALS AS WELL AS SOVIET BEHAVIOR IN HORN OF AFRICA, SHULMAN SAID ECONOMIC RELATIONS "ARE NOT FEASIBLE INSTRUMENT BECAUSE WE DON'T HAVE TRADE AGREEMENT IN FORCE AND WE AREN'T ABLE TO PUT, SAY, LIMITS ON CREDITS BECAUSE THESE SIMPLY AREN'T BEING GRANTED. THERE MAY BE SOME OTHER ACTIONS WE CAN TAKE, BUT SALT IS NOT DESIRABLE INSTRUMENT TO USE BECAUSE SALT AGREEMENT, IF AND WHEN WE GET ONE, WOULD BE IN OUR OWN SECURITY INTEREST. IT WOULD NOT BE DONE AS FAVOR TO RUSSIANS. IT WOULD NOT BE OF MORE ADVANTAGE TO THEM THAN TO US, SO IT DOESN'T OFFER VERY GOOD LEVERAGE. WHAT ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN SAYING TO RUSSIANS IS THAT LACK OF RESTRAINT IN AFRICA WOULD AFFECT GENERAL CLIMATE IN THIS COUNTRY AND THAT MAY HAVE ITS

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EFFECT IN MANY WAYS.... AS MUCH AS IS POLITICALLY
FEASIBLE, I THINK WE SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THAT OUR OBJEC-
TIVE INTEREST IS IN TRYING TO IMPROVE OUR SECURITY BY
GOOD SALT TREATY, NO MATTER WHAT KIND OF REGIME IS IN
POWER IN SOVIET UNION. SALT ISN'T FAVOR. IT ISN'T WAY
OF REWARDING. IT DOESN'T DEPEND UPON SOVIET UNION BEING
DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. OUR INTEREST IN SALT IS BECAUSE TWO
COUNTRIES ARE ENGAGED IN MILITARY COMPETITION WITH EACH
OTHER AND THAT MEANS THAT WE CAN'T PUT IT OFF UNTIL SOME

MILLENIAL FUTURE WHEN SOVIET UNION MAY HAVE BECOME MORE
DEMOCRATIC."

6. RICHARD BURT, WRITING IN NEW YORK TIMES MONDAY, SAID
"NEW COOLNESS" HAS CREPT INTO RELATIONS BETWEEN STATE
DEPARTMENT AND NSC DURING RECENT WEEKS. "IN PART,
OFFICIALS ATTRIBUTE TENSION TO 'BUREAUCRATIC MISUNDER-
STANDINGS' AND PRESSURES CREATED BY RECENT CRITICISM AT
HOME AND ABROAD OF ADMINISTRATION'S FOREIGN POLICY
PERFORMANCE. BUT SOME OFFICIALS ARGUE THAT AT CORE OF
DISAGREEMENT IS QUESTION OF HOW BEST TO INSURE SMOOTH
RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW AND, PARTICULARLY, HOW TO ACHIEVE
NEW ARMS AGREEMENT THAT WOULD WIN APPROVAL OF CONGRESS.
HIGH RANKING STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL DESCRIBES BASIC
DISAGREEMENT THIS WAY: 'ZBIG BELIEVES THAT ONLY BY DIS-
PLAYING BACKBONE CAN ADMINISTRATION ACHIEVE ITS GOALS
WITH MOSCOW. BUT MOST PEOPLE AROUND HERE THINK THAT
TOUGH TALK AND THREATENING POSTURE COULD RUIN CHANCES FOR
WORKING OUT MORE STABLE RELATIONSHIP.'" CHRISTOPHER

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